

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 3950

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, KS, JA

SUBJ: NFDYS CASE

REF: A. SEOUL 3849 B. SEOUL 3877

1. WHEELS OF JUSTICE CONTINUE TO TURN ON NATIONAL FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC YOUTH AND STUDENTS (NFDYS) CASE, BUT WHERE HAS BEEN COMPLETE NEWS BLACKOUT SINCE JUNE 15 INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT AND JUNE 16 NEWS STORIES ABOUT JAPANESE DEFENDANTS' TESTIMONY.

2. CASE IS BEING TRIED BEFORE THREE PANELS OF JUDGES, EACH RESPONSIBLE FOR A SEPARATE GROUP OF DEFENDANTS. WE UNDERSTAND FROM PRESS SOURCES THAT FIRST PANEL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR 32 PRESENT AND FORMER STUDENT ACTIVISTS HEADED BY DEFENDANT YI CHOL; SECOND PANEL IS HANDLING FIVE OLD LEFTISTS HEADED BY SO TO-WON AND TO YI-CHONG AND 16 OF THEIR FOLLOWERS, MOSTLY STUDENTS; AND THIRD PANEL IS FOR TWO JAPANESE. FIRST AND SECOND PANELS EACH HAVE HELD THREE SESSIONS. THIRD PANEL HAD SECOND SESSION JUNE 18 AND THRID SESSION IS SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 21. PRESS SOURCES ESTIMATE THAT ALL THREE PANELS WILL HEAR PROSECUTION DEMAND FOR PUNISHMENT EARLY NEXT WEEK AND PRONOUNCE SENTENCE AROUND JUNE 27.

3. JAPANESE EMBOFF INFORMED US THAT SECOND TRIAL SESSION OF JAPAN-
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ESE SUSPECTS LASTED JUST 45 MINUTES AND WAS LIMITED TO PRESENTAT-

ION OF WRITTEN EVIDENCE. LATTER INCLUDED TACHIKAWA'S PUBLISHED NEWS STORIES AND A SIGNED STATEMENT BY KOREAN STUDENT SUSPECT YI CHOL AFFIRMING TWO JAPANESE' INVOLVEMENT. SOURCE SAID TACHIKAWA MAINTAINED HIS SOLE PURPOSE IN OFFERING SUPPORT INCLUDING ARMAMENTS TO ROK STUDENTS WAS TO ELICIT NEWS; HOWEVER, HAYAKAWA PROFESSED SYMPATHY WITH STUDENT AIM OF REPLACING PARK GOVERNMENT WITH A "POPULAR" REGIME. SOURCE SAID HAYAKAWA MAINTAINED THAT HE HAD VERBALLY INDICATED DESIRE TO RESIGN FROM JAPAN COMMUNIST PARTY, BUT HAD NOT DONE SO IN WRITING. SAID HAYAKAWA'S PRESENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS COMMUNISM WAS UNCLEAR.

4. VICE MINISTER DEFENSE CHOI KWAN SOO TOLD EMBOFF THAT TWO JAPANESE HAVE ADMITTED IN COURT SUBSTANTIALLY EVERYTHING THEY HAD BEEN ACCUSED OF AND THAT CASE WAS OPEN AND SHUT. IT WAS ESSENTIAL HE SAID THAT LEGAL PROCESS BE COMPLETED AND SENTENCES IMPOSED BEFORE "POLITICAL SOLUTION" COULD BE SOUGHT WITH JAPANESE.

5. OUR INFORMATION ON OTHER TRIAL SESSIONS IS VERY LIMITED. USIS PRESS SOURCE INDICATES THAT PRIME STUDENT SUSPECT YI CHOL HAS ADMITTED ALL CHARGES EXCEPT INTENTIONAL COLLABORATION WITH NORTH KOREANS. OTHER PRESS SOURCES DESCRIBE ATTITUDE OF STUDENT DEFENDANTS AS CALM DEFIANCE, APPARENTLY REFLECTING COMMITMENT TO THEIR CAUSE.

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